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## ABSTRACT

Although popular literature cites between 25,000 and 100,000 parental child snatchings a year, no empirical studies have been conducted to support this estimate. To determine an empirical estimate of the extent of parental child snatchings, telephone interviews were conducted by Louis Harris and Associates with a representative cross section of adults, 18 years of age and over, at 3,745 sampling points within the United States, between June and August of 1982. Respondents were read a definition of child snatching and were subsequently asked if they knew of an instance of parental child snatching in their family or in a family they personally knew. Respondents who answered "yes" were asked questions about the number of cases, the children involved, and how they knew of the incident. An analysis of the results showed that 273 respondents (7.3 percent) reported exposure to an incident of parental child snatching, with 55 respondents (1.5 percent) reporting personal involvement within the previous 12 months. Projecting this rate to 83.5 million households, assuming that at least two households are involved in each incident of child snatching, and allowing for a sample error of .39 percent, there are an estimated 459,000 to 751,000 incidents of child snatching each year. Given that more than two household could be personally involved, this estimate could be considered the highest possible projection, making the 100,000 popular estimate very low. This preliminary incidence survey is useful to those trying to establish the full extent of the issue as well as to researchers who wish to study further this hidden family problem. (Author/BL)

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PARENTAL CHILD SNATCHING: A PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE  
OF THE NATIONAL INCIDENCE\*

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## ABSTRACT

### PARENTAL CHILD SNATCHING: A PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF THE NATIONAL INCIDENCE

This paper reports the results of a preliminary survey to measure the incidence of parental child snatching. Parental child snatching is defined in this study as the taking, restraining, or not returning after a visit, a child under the age of 14 years and keeping the child concealed so that the other parent does not know where the child is. Although both the popular and professional literature consistently cite a figure of 25,000 to 100,000 snatched children a year, until now, there has been no empirical research which establishes or supports such an estimate.

Telephone interviews were conducted by Louis Harris and Associates with a representative cross-section of 3,745 adults 18 years of age or older within the United States. Two hundred and seventy-three respondents reported exposure to an incident of parental child snatching either in their own family or a family they personally knew. Fifty-five respondents (or 1.5 percent of the sample) reported personal involvement in an incident of child snatching in the previous twelve months. Projecting this rate to 83.5 million households, assuming that at least two households are involved in each incident of child snatching, and allowing for a sampling error of  $\pm .39$  percent, there are an estimated 459,000 to 751,000 incidents of child snatching each year. Given that more than two household could be personally involved, this estimate could be considered the highest possible projection. If four households are involved in an average incident, the projection would be 313,700 incidents per year.

Parental child snatching, while not common in American households, certainly affects a significant number of individuals. The commonly held estimate of 100,000 children snatched per year appears to be an underestimate.

This preliminary incidence survey is useful to those trying to establish the full extent of the issue as well as researchers who wish to design further research on this hidden family problem.

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PARENTAL CHILD SNATCHING: A PRIMARY ESTIMATE  
OF THE NATIONAL INCIDENCE

She dropped the dime in the slot and pushed the buttons for what would be the first of a long day of frustrating telephone calls. As she waited for someone to answer she took a deep breath to compose herself. When the call was answered she began to tell of how she had kissed her son goodbye and sent him out the door for the school bus. As her son reached the end of the front walk, a car pulled up and out jumped the woman's ex-husband. He grabbed the boy under his arm, jumped back into the car, and sped away. The woman's child support settlement was barely enough to cover essentials, so she didn't even have a telephone. That is why she was hunched over the phone in the nearby Holiday Inn trying to explain to the police that her son had been kidnapped and she wanted their help to get him back. "Family matter" she was told. "Call your lawyer." "Lindbergh Law--can't be charged with kidnapping your own child." She would call the Sheriff, the FBI, the police again, and over and over hear that there was nothing they could do. The boy was taken by his father. No crime had been committed. After a pocket full of dimes, hours of stifling tears, she went home to her empty house to cry. There was nothing she could do, and it seemed like nothing anyone else would do (Gelles, 1984).

Parental child snatching, also referred to as parental kidnapping, child abduction, legal kidnapping, and child snatching, emerged as a social issue in the late 1970's.<sup>1</sup> Originally, it appears that parental child snatching was not an illegal activity. Legal precedents, such as the 1932 Federal Kidnap Legislation, also called the "Lindbergh Law," specifically excluded the taking of a child by a parent from another parent as a case of kidnapping requiring legal redress. Current case law indicates that many courts do not view the so-called abduction by one custodial parent from another as a case of kidnapping (Katz et. al., 1980). Until recently, even when there was a custody decree, it was possible for parents to "legally" abduct their children. Parents could take a child from the state in which

the custody decree was issued and flee to another state and seek a favorable custody decree. The Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act (also known as the UCCJA) was drafted to prevent parents from "forum shopping" for favorable custody decrees. Because parents sometimes flee and take their child to another country, a series of international conferences were held in the Hague to draft international legislation to deal with the problem of international parental child snatching. At present, the UCCJA has been adopted by more than 45 states. There is no binding international law on child snatching. And, individual judges still can make a custody ruling in spite of the UCCJA being in effect in their states. Police departments view parental kidnapping as less serious and of less pressing concern than other types of missing children. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Justice Department is still reluctant to get deeply involved in instances of child snatching. The most recent piece of Federal Legislation, PL-96-611, allows states to use the Federal Parent Locator service to find absent parents in cases in which the states request assistance in instances of unlawful taking or restraining of a child. Individual parents, such as the composite case described at the beginning of the paper, cannot use the Locator Service.

Individual case examples of parental child snatching reveal the pathos, heartache, anguish, and profound frustration experienced by parents whose children have been taken from them by estranged or former spouses. In some instances, children have actually died during snatchings. Haas (1977) described the case of a father who snatched his children, only to be killed with the children as the car crashed speeding away from the abduction. It is assumed that children who are not injured during the abduction suffer long and lasting emotional and psychological consequences from the experience. Senator Alan Cranston, when introducing hearings on the problem of "child

snatching" described child snatching as a "subtle form of child abuse." (U.S. Senate, 1979). Although the work of Wallerstein and Kelley (Wallerstein and Kelley, 1980; Kelley and Wallerstein, 1976; Wallerstein and Kelley, 1976) suggests that the process of child abduction would have significant negative consequences for children, there are no systematic empirical data which address this assumption, beyond some anecdotal and case descriptions. Since some believe that fewer than 10 percent of abducted children are ever located (Clifford, 1979; U.S. Senate, 1980), it may be impossible to assess the claim of harm and damage.

As in the case of other family issues which emerged from behind closed doors of American households to become social problems in the 1970's and 1980's, the mandate to address the problem of child snatching was generated, in part, by presenting estimates of tens of thousands of victims, and accompanying these statistics with personal testimony of the anguish and emotional heartache of the parent who has the child abducted. The estimates of the incidence of parental child snatching are almost uniformly cited as between 25,000 to 100,000 children snatched per year (Agopian, 1980a; 1980b; 1980c; 1981; Lewis, 1978; Westgate, 1979; Dodson, 1979; U.S. Senate, 1979). These figures (and recently the citations are almost exclusively the 100,000 figures) are so consistently cited that they appear to be the official and generally accepted estimates of incidence. Some writers, in fact, attribute these estimates to "official" sources, such as The Library of Congress (Eccleston, 1980), and The Congressional Record (Bodenheimer, 1979). In point of fact, however, the estimates of between 25,000 to 100,000 cases are probably, and most accurately, attributable to Arnold Miller and his wife Ray Gummel, who organized and operate Children's Rights Incorporated (Duckworth, 1977; Trescott, 1976).

The 25,000 to 100,000 estimate appears to be a projection made by Mr. Miller and Ms. Gummel based on their correspondence and contacts in the course of operating CRI (Mullin, 1978).

Thus, despite the fact that the 25,000 to 100,000 estimate has become the nearly official and most widely quoted statistic in the field of parental child snatching, it would appear to have no empirical standing and be another example of the "Woozle Effect" (Gelles, 1980b). Bodenheimer's report to the Hague Special Commission on International Child Abduction by One Parent in August, 1978, that "No statistics or other data on the number of abductions by parents are available in the United States" (Bodenheimer, 1979), is still accurate.

#### Why Be Concerned With the Incidence of Child Snatching?

This paper presents the results of a national survey designed to develop a preliminary empirical estimate of the incidence of parental child snatching. One obvious question is, why be concerned with measuring the incidence of this phenomenon? There are two reasons for making the scientific measurement of parental child snatching an important issue. First, from a strictly pragmatic point of view, one chief and necessary means of translating any social issue into a social problem is to demonstrate that the problem affects a significant number of people (Merton and Nisbet, 1976). Of course, this is but one facet of the definition of a social problem; but, the history of concern with child abuse, wife abuse, family violence, and sexual abuse of children amply illustrates that although the tragedy, horror, and emotional pain of individual instances of abuse and neglect were sufficient to generate concern about these issues, it was not until there were scientifically generated data pointing to millions of cases annually of abuse and violence, that steps were taken to define these



issues as social problems and social policy issues for state and federal agencies and legislatures. In the case of child abuse, the importance of incidence data was demonstrated when the federal legislation which established the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect included a clause mandating a national incidence survey to measure the national and state by state incidence of abuse and neglect.

A second reason to be concerned with a measure of the incidence of parental child snatching, is the methodological necessity of knowing the incidence of child snatching in the general population in order to begin to design research which is based on representative samples, and which can begin to answer some of the key practical and policy questions surrounding the issue. Sooner or later the questions raised in the study of child snatching will have to be addressed using representative sampling if any generalizable knowledge is to be obtained. It is nearly impossible to begin planning a survey of a representative population with a presumed low base rate phenomenon such as child snatching until the planner knows the expected incidence of the phenomenon. Unless an investigator knows about how many households will have to be contacted to yield an appropriate number of cases of child snatching, then it is impossible to determine: (1) the total number of households needed in the sample; (2) the cost of telephone or interviewer time; and, (3) the total cost of the survey. Without an idea of incidence, a responsible investigator could not begin to design the sample and the cost of the research.

The obvious dilemma is that it takes a representative survey to arrive at an incidence estimate, but one needs an incidence estimate to plan the representative survey. This paper presents the results of a preliminary survey which was designed to solve the chicken and egg dilemma as well as provide, for the first time, an empirical estimate of the extent of parental

child snatching.

## METHODS

Telephone interviews were conducted by Louis Harris and Associates with a representative cross-section of adults 18 years of age and over at 3,745 sampling points within the United States. The survey was conducted in three waves (with approximately 1,250 independently generated sampling points each) between June 18 and August 10, 1982.

Telephone survey research methods were the optimum means of a preliminary measure of the incidence of parental child snatching. The advantages of telephone surveys and the comparability of results to in-person surveys have been extensively documented (Groves and Kahn, 1979; Miller, Rollins, and Thomas, 1982; Klecka and Tuchfarber, 1978). In brief, these advantages include: ease of administration, lower cost than in-person interviewing, greater speed than in-person interviewing, better access to hard to reach households, and comparable results to in-person interviews. The drawbacks of telephone interviews include less than 100 percent telephone coverage of households, the biases of the telephone sampling frame, and the impact of the telephone itself on reliability and validity.

Previous experience with sensitive subjects, such as spouse abuse, indicates that telephone interviews yield higher response rates than in-person interviews, and that some bias is reduced by the anonymity of the telephone (Harris and Associates, 1979; Gelles, 1983).

### Measuring the Incidence of Parental Child Snatching

This survey used a technique similar to that employed by Gil (1970) in his preliminary estimate of the national incidence of child abuse. Gil added

questions to a national survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Corporation. First, he defined the term "child abuse," then he asked each respondent a series of questions about their own behavior and their awareness of abuse in neighboring families. In the survey of parental child snatching, questions were added on to three Louis Harris and Associates national surveys. At the conclusion of the main body of the survey, respondents were told that they were going to be asked a few questions about parental child snatching. First, respondents were read the following definition of parental child snatching:

"For our purposes, parents can be married, separated, or divorced. There does not have to be a legal custody decree.

Parental child snatching is when a parent physically takes, restrains, or does not return a child under the age of 14 after a visit, and keeps the child concealed so that the other parent does not know where the child is."

If the respondent asked what we meant by "restrain," he or she was told: "restrain" means prevents a child from returning to or contacting the other parent."

There does not appear to be a generally accepted definition of "child snatching" (Gelles, 1980a). Thus, the definition employed in this survey was a compromise between the narrow legal definitions of parental child snatching which typically define snatchings as occurring only when there is a legal custody decree and the child is "snatched" by the non-custodial parent, and the broader definitions which define any deprivation of a parent from seeing his or her child an instance of "snatching."

Following the presentation of the definition of child snatching, respondents were asked if they knew of an instance of parental child snatching which had occurred in their family or a family of someone they personally know in the last twelve months (see Appendeix for the questions). If respondents

answered "no," "not sure," or refused to answer, the interview was completed. Respondents who answered "yes," were asked about how many cases they knew about, how many children were snatched, and how the respondent knew about the incident.

## RESULTS

### Exposure to Parental Child Snatching

Two hundred and seventy-three of the 3,745 respondents (7.3 percent) reported that they had personal knowledge (either in their own family or a family they personally knew) of at least one instance of parental child snatching in the past year (Table 1). Those who reported personal knowledge of an instance of parental child snatching were asked how many different families they knew about in which such an instance occurred. Among those with personal knowledge of a child snatching incident in the previous twelve months, 71 percent said that they knew of an instance in only one family. Seventeen percent reported personal exposure to parental child snatching in three different families, 1 percent said they knew of instances in four different families, 1 percent said they knew of instances in five different families, and 2 percent reported instances in six or more different families (Table 2).

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Tables 1 and 2 Here

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Given the presumed rarity of parental child snatching, it seems difficult to assume that the average person would know about instances of snatching in

three or more different families. Thus, it would seem likely that those reporting personal exposure to child snatching in more than three different families are probably individuals who were professionally rather than personally exposed. Attorneys, police officers, social workers, and other professionals probably account for most of those reporting awareness in three or more families. Obviously, with a nationally representative sample, we are going to tap respondents who are professionally as well as personally involved in child snatching episodes. There is then, the likelihood of some reliable reports of awareness in a survey such as this.

Despite the fact that respondents were told that they should report only those instances of child snatching that occurred in their own family or of a family they personally knew, we were concerned that some awareness may have come through hearsay, rumor, newspaper articles, or television programs. Thus, each respondent who indicated awareness of an incident of parental child snatching was asked about the source of his or her awareness. Fifty-five of the 3,765 respondents (1.5 percent) reported that they were personally involved in the first incident they mentioned. Another one hundred and fifty people (4 percent) heard about the incident directly from the family involved. One percent heard about the episode from people in the community. Smaller percentages heard about the case of child snatching from rumors, newspapers, or from other sources. None of the respondents reported that they heard about the child snatching from the radio or television.

### The Incidence of Parental Child Snatching

When Gil (1976) conducted his national survey on child abuse, the number of respondents who admitted to abusing their own children was too low to make an incidence projection. Thus, Gil projected the national incidence of

child abuse by using the responses to the questions concerning awareness of abuse in neighboring families. Although the survey of child snatching obtained estimates of exposure to snatching episodes, we do not believe that awareness of parental child snatching is an appropriate basis for estimating incidence. First, there is the very real possibility of double counting the same case by different observers (Light, 1974). However, using an unclustered sample of 3,745 households minimizes the risk of double counting. A second, and more important reason not to rely on personal awareness is that awareness of instances of child snatching (or child abuse, or spouse abuse), is likely to vary with the number of other families a respondent knows (Light, 1974). Knowledge of other families can also vary by occupation, social contacts, and personality. Without an actual measure of the social network of respondents, projections from awareness data could be quite misleading.

Because the survey established the basis of personal knowledge of child snatching, we did collect data on whether the instance which the respondent was aware of was one the respondent was personally involved in. Because of the large sample size, our data on personal involvement in acts of child snatching does allow for making an incidence projection.

One and a half percent of the public reported personal involvement in a parental child snatching incident in the previous twelve months. Given a sample size of 3,745, the maximum expected sampling error at the 95 percent confidence level is  $\pm .39$  percent. Allowing for sampling error, the survey found that from 1.1 percent to 1.8 percent of the non-institutionalized adult population were personally involved in one or more instances of parental child snatching in the year previous to the summer of 1982.

Projecting these figures to the 83.5 million households in the United States in the summer of 1982, a 1.5 percent rate of personal involvement yields

a population projection of 1.25 million households in which there was personal involvement in a case of child snatching in the previous year. However, we assume that acts of child snatching must involve at least two households--the one from which the child was snatched and the one to which the child was taken. Since, by definition, child snatching means the child was hidden, two households must be involved, even if the parents were sharing a house at the time of the incident (a less likely possibility, since, probably, the parents were divorced or separated at the time of the incident). Thus, in determining a national estimate of child snatching, the number of households must, at a minimum, be divided by two. This approach yields an estimate of 626,000 cases of parental child snatching in a year. Taking into account the sampling error, the survey yields an estimate of between 459,000 and 751,000 cases of parental child snatchings annually (assuming that only two households were involved in each incident).

Given assumptions we made about exposure to child snatching--that is, those who reported exposure to more than three incidents a year were probably professionals who dealt with some aspect of the snatching, it is reasonable to assume that households other than "snatcher" and "snatchee" may be involved. These could include grandparents, uncles, aunts, other in-laws, professionals (e.g. lawyers, judges, police officers, social workers, teachers--if the child is snatched from school), or other friends or accomplices (private detectives who specialize in "snatching" children).

Table 3 presents incidence estimates using different assumptions about the possible number of households involved in each case. If as many as four households are involved in the average episode of child snatching, then the estimate of snatching would be 313,000 cases per year. If the least number of households that can be involved is 2, then the highest estimate of parental

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Table 3 About Here

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child snatching is 626,000. Within the limits of the study and the definition used, this is a reasonable estimate of the top of the range of the incidence of child snatching.

Limitations of the Study

There are, of course, very real, limitations of these survey data, which must be taken into consideration when reading these results. The survey consisted of but four questions asked about parental child snatching. The nature of personal involvement was not followed up, so it is impossible to separate professional involvement in child snatching from personal involvement. Although the principals in child snatching are the parent who takes the child and the parent from whom the child was snatched, teachers, police officers, judges, and others might also describe themselves as personally involved (consider the number of telephone calls placed by the women in the case description that opened the paper). To the extent that many people other than the parents are involved in child snatchings and will report this as "personal involvement," this study will overestimate the incidence of the phenomenon in the general population.

On the other hand, the projection of incidence is based on incidents of parental child snatching, not the number of children actually snatched. In cases where respondents were exposed to child snatching, 37 percent of the instances involved more than one child (See Table 4). To the extent that



more than one child is involved in an incident, this survey underestimates the number of children affected by child snatching.

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Table 4 About Here

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A final caveat concerns the definition of child snatching. It was designed to be a broad definition, and thus it could well capture a wide range of domestic problems which could result in a child being taken and hidden from a custodial parent. For example, a battered wife who flees to a shelter with her children to escape abuse could be included under the definition used in this study (as well as other definitions used in the field of parental child snatching--Saunders and Bernheim, 1979). The stereotypical marital dispute which ends with a spouse taking the children to his or her parent's home without informing the other spouse could also be included under this definition. A critical problem with both the definition and the survey is that the length of time the children's whereabouts were unknown is not specified or measured. A substantial number of the parental child snatchings reported in this survey could well have been of short duration.

A final problem with the definition could arise due to an unintended interpretation of the definition. Remember that the definition stated: "...a parent physically takes, restrains, or does not return a child under the age of 14 after a visit..." The phrase "after a visit" was meant to qualify the "does not return" part of the statement. However, some people may have interpreted this statement as meaning that "after a visit" qualifies all the verbs, including take or restrain. This interpretation is obviously much narrower

than was intended, and it is an open question as to how many respondents heard the definition in that narrow manner.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The brevity of the survey and the issues concerning the definitions points out the potential sources of non-sampling error in the sample estimates and population projections of the annual incidence of parental child snatching. Nevertheless, the sources of non-sampling error tend to operate in both directions--increasing as well as decreasing survey estimates. Obviously, this study can not be considered the last word on the incidence of parental child snatching, but it is the first word which is empirically grounded. This survey avoided the consistent bias found in research on sensitive family problems of basing incidence estimates on only those cases which come to public attention. Even with all the limitations of the survey, it does appear that the long standing and nearly standard estimate of 100,000 cases may substantially underestimate the true incidence of such cases.

Although the survey does not suggest that parental child snatching is common, it does find that the phenomenon is somewhat more widespread than has been previously estimated and affects a large number of American households. The base rate of 1.5 percent of American households with some kind of personal involvement with an instance of child snatching in the past year is useful information for investigators who wish to plan surveys and research projects. The task of locating adequate numbers of respondents who have been personally involved in child snatchings is formidable and expensive, but it is possible. More importantly, it is now possible to begin to obtain answers to the important questions which have been raised about child snatching. Who snatches children?

From whom? Under what conditions? With what consequences for the child, the parents, the legal system, and society? We need not speculate any longer about these and other questions. The task is now to begin the gathering of data to address these questions.

TABLE 1  
EXPOSURE TO CHILD SNATCHING  
BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Q.: Do you know of an instance of parental child snatching which has occurred in your family or a family of someone you personally know in the last twelve months?

	<u>BASE</u>		<u>YES, KNOW OF AN INSTANCE</u>	<u>NO, DON'T KNOW OF AN INSTANCE</u>	<u>NOT SURE</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>3745</u>	%	<u>7</u>	<u>92</u>	*
<u>REGION</u>					
EAST	989	%	7	92	1
MIDWEST	992	%	7	93	*
SOUTH	1073	%	8	92	*
WEST	691	%	8	91	*
<u>SIZE OF PLACE</u>					
CITIES	1084	%	8	92	*
SUBURBS	1035	%	6	93	1
TOWN	569	%	7	93	1
RURAL	1057	%	8	91	*
<u>AGE</u>					
18-29 YEARS	1096	%	10	90	*
30-49 YEARS	1382	%	8	91	*
50-64 YEARS	745	%	6	94	*
65 AND OVER	501	%	3	95	1
<u>SEX</u>					
MALE	1817	%	6	93	1
FEMALE	1928	%	8	92	*
<u>EDUCATION</u>					
8TH GRADE	245	%	3	95	2
HIGH SCHOOL	1787	%	9	91	*
COLLEGE OR MORE	1698	%	7	93	*
<u>INCOME</u>					
\$7,500 OR LESS	494	%	7	91	1
\$7,501 TO \$15,000	694	%	8	92	*
\$15,001 TO \$25,000	989	%	8	92	*
\$25,001 AND OVER	1333	%	7	92	*

\*LESS THAN 5.0%

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT FAMILIES IN WHICH AN  
 INSTANCE OF CHILD SNATCHING OCCURRED  
 BASE: KNOW OF AN INSTANCE OF PARENTAL CHILD SNATCHING

Q.: How many different families do you know about in which an instance of  
 child snatching occurred?

BASE	<u>TOTAL</u> 275 %
<u>NUMBER OF FAMILIES:</u>	
1	71
2	17
3	5
4	1
5	1
6	*
7	-
8	1
9	-
10 AND OVER	1
NOT SURE/REFUSED	4

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\*LESS THAN 0.5%.

TABLE 3  
PROJECTED ESTIMATES OF ANNUAL INCIDENCE  
OF PARENTAL CHILD SNATCHING

<u>TOTAL AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS</u>	<u>RATE OF HOUSEHOLD INVOLVEMENT</u>	<u>AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS INVOLVED PER INCIDENT</u>	<u>ANNUAL INCIDENCE</u>	<u>ANNUAL INCIDENCE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT RANGE OF SAMPLING ERROR*</u>
83.5 MILLION	1.5%	2	626,250	751,500-459,250
83.5 MILLION	1.5%	3	417,500	501,000-306,167
83.5 MILLION	1.5%	4	313,125	375,750-229,625

\*MAXIMUM EXPECTED SAMPLING ERROR OF  $\pm .39$  PERCENTAGE POINTS AT THE 95%  
CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR THE ESTIMATE OF RATE OF HOUSEHOLD INVOLVEMENT --  
I.E., 1.8% IS THE UPPER BOUNDARY AND 1.1% IS THE LOWER BOUNDARY.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SNATCHED: FIRST FAMILY MENTIONED  
 BASE: KNOW OF AN INSTANCE OF PARENTAL CHILD SNATCHING

Q.: How many children were snatched?

BASE	<u>TOTAL</u> 274 %
<u>NUMBER OF CHILDREN:</u>	
1	63
2	27
3	8
4	1
5 OR MORE	1
NOT SURE	1

#### FOOTNOTE

1. This paper, as is the case with many others, will also use these terms interchangeably.



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Now I want to ask you a question or two about parental child snatching. Let me explain what I mean by parental child snatching.

For our purposes, the parents can be married, separated, or divorced. There does not have to be a legal custody decree.

Parental child snatching is when a parent physically takes, restrains, or does not return a child under the age of 14 after a visit, and keeps the child concealed so that the other parent does not know where the child is.

INTERVIEWER: "RESTRAIN" MEANS PREVENTS THE CHILD FROM RETURNING TO OR CONTACTING THE OTHER PARENT.

1a. Do you know of an instance of parental child snatching which has occurred in your family or a family of someone you personally know in the last twelve months?

Yes, know of an instance.....(40(\_\_\_\_\_-1 (ASK Q.1b)

No, don't know of instance.....-2  
Not sure.....-3  
Refused.....-4 } (SKIP TO Q.F1)

1b. How many different families do you know about in which an instance of child snatching occurred?

(RECORD NUMBER)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(41-42)  
Not sure.....(43(\_\_\_\_\_-1  
Refused.....-2

ASK Q.1c and Q.1d IN SEQUENCE FOR UP TO FOUR OF THE FAMILIES REPORTED IN Q.1b. IF MORE THAN ONE INSTANCE PER FAMILY, PROBE FOR THE MOST RECENT.

1c. How many children were snatched? RECORD BELOW

1d. How do you know about this instance? DO NOT READ LIST, SINGLE RECORD BELOW

Q.1c	1st Family	2nd Family	3rd Family	4th Family
Number of children snatched.....	(44-45)	(48-49)	(52-53)	(56-57)
(RECORD NUMBER)				
Not sure.....	(46(____-1	(50(____-1	(54(____-1	(58(____-1

Q.1d

How Know About

a. Was personally involved in the incident.....	(47(____-1	(51(____-1	(55(____-1	(59(____-1
b. Heard about it directly from family involved.....	____-2	____-2	____-2	____-2
c. Heard about it from other people in the community.....	____-3	____-3	____-3	____-3
d. Heard rumors about it.....	____-4	____-4	____-4	____-4
e. Read about it in the papers.....	____-5	____-5	____-5	____-5
f. Heard about it on radio or television.....	____-6	____-6	____-6	____-6
Other (SPECIFY).....	____-7	____-7	____-7	____-7
Not sure/can't remember.....	____-8	____-8	____-8	____-8

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